

2025



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Question 1: Short Answer Secondary Source**3 points****General Scoring Notes**

- Each point is earned independently.
- **Accuracy:** These scoring guidelines require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam responses should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.
- **Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. Description requires more than simply mentioning an isolated term.
- **Explain:** Provide information about how or why a historical development or process occurs or how or why a relationship exists.

A Describe the main argument made by the historian in the excerpt. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- The invention of the department store in 1800s France offered new roles for women.
- Department stores catered to a wider array of customers than traditional shops and introduced more people to consumerism.
- Department stores invented new techniques of selling merchandise.

B Describe a relevant historical context for the development discussed in the excerpt. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Paris and other cities were growing rapidly at the time and were increasingly able to support large retail stores.
- Increasing wages of working-class and middle-class French people created more demand for a wider variety of goods.
- The expansion of industry during the Second Industrial Revolution allowed for the production of a wider variety of consumer goods.
- Europeans expanded their colonial empires in search of raw materials for manufacturing and new markets for their manufactured goods.
- Women in the middle classes did not typically work outside the home in the mid-1800s and the Cult of Domesticity encouraged them to spend their time shopping and maintaining their home.
- Women in the lower classes frequently did work outside the home and department stores became a place where they sought employment.

C Explain one way that the development discussed in the excerpt affected European society. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Women’s negative experiences in the workforce encouraged the political movement for women to obtain greater rights and economic opportunities.
 - The expansion of consumer goods marketed to women led to an even greater demand for such goods, particularly labor-saving devices for the home.
 - Women gained new job opportunities since large department stores and other services needed lots of cheap labor as clerks and salespeople, eventually leading to other opportunities for women in management.
 - Middle-class women were encouraged to consume more and spend more since department stores and other consumer institutions depended on a large volume of sales and expected continued growth.
 - In the long term, the aggressive tactics of large retailers led to critiques of and a reaction against excessive consumerism, including the emergence of green parties.
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Sample 1A:

A. The main argument made by the historian was that consumerism was at its peak during the mid-1800s. Consumerism was created during the Second Industrial Revolution where goods that weren't essential to living were created and those who had disposable income, or extra money from their income after paying for essential needs, were the primary market. This was the argument of the historian because in the excerpt, she is arguing about how women were the primary market of department stores, and since department stores don't sell living necessities, that makes women consumers.

B. A relevant historical context for the development in the excerpt was the Second Industrial Revolution. The Second Industrial Revolution occurred in the mid-1800s after the first Industrial Revolution and had major changes in society and socioeconomic classes, as well as new markets opening up. This is relevant to women being the primary buyers for department stores because during the Second Industrial Revolution, new markets were opening up as there was more demands for consumer goods, so department stores opened as a result.

C. One way this development affected European society was through leisure activities. Leisure activities were hobbies that Europeans would engage themselves in as they had more time and money (from disposable income) to do things they liked. This is a way the development of department stores affected society because department stores created a leisure activity for women as shopping became a more common hobby or activity for women to engage themselves in.

Sample 1B:

A) The main argument made by the historian in the excerpt is the increasing appearance of women in various places of employment. Theresa M. McBride emphasizes this in her first paragraph by mentioning the Paris department store as the 'world of women.' Therefore placing an emphasis on the new roles undertaken and expected of women.

B) A relevant historical context that can be provided by the development in the excerpt is the increasing role of women in the workforce during and after the First and Second World Wars. As men were increasingly drafted and went away to fight in the wars, women were placed in a new role of employment with the necessity of filling the absence of the men in the workforce.

C) One way that the development discussed in the excerpt affected European society is through the increase in both involvement of women in workplaces, contrary to the beliefs of the Cult of Domesticity and the rise of consumerism in society. As prices were lowered to adhere to members of the lower middle class there was an increase in the influence of commercialism.

Sample 1C:

A. The main argument made by the historian in this excerpt was that women were the leaders of the Paris department store in the mid-1800's. This argument challenges the stereotype of woman in this time period not being able to own anything and brings a new idea from this time period to life.

B. A relevant context for this development is women's suffrage and how women have been constantly fighting for their rights and equality with men. This department store where women are, "encouraged to find their life's meaning in consumption" demonstrates the other activities done by women that bring them closer to freedom and equality with men.(Theresa M. McBride)

C. This development affected European society with bringing the idea of consumerism into the economy. These department stores could not rely on the business from only the bourgeois, so they would lower prices on goods to attract customers from the "petite bourgeoisie"(Theresa M. McBride). This led to the increasing number of people buying products from these department stores, creating the modern consumer society we know today.

Short Answer Question 1

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

NEW for 2025: The question overviews can be found in the *Chief Reader Report on Student Responses on AP Central*.

Sample: 1A

SAQ Part A Score: 1

SAQ Part B Score: 1

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Score: 3

The response earned 1 point for Part A for describing the historian’s argument about consumerism as products that are not “essential to living” and the change in the role of women.

The response earned 1 point for Part B for describing the Second Industrial Revolution opening new markets and creating more consumer goods.

The response earned 1 point for Part C for the explanation of how leisure activities developed and the emergence of shopping as an activity women could engage in as a form of leisure.

Sample: 1B

SAQ Part A Score: 1

SAQ Part B Score: 0

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Score: 2

The response earned 1 point for Part A for describing the new employment of women in department stores.

The response did not earn the point for Part B because the contextual evidence about World War I and World War II is beyond the scope of the prompt.

The response earned 1 point for Part C for the explanation of women gaining new job opportunities and the encouragement of middle-class women to consume and spend more.

Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1C

SAQ Part A Score: 0

SAQ Part B Score: 0

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Score : 1

The response did not earn the point for Part A because the description of women’s roles in this time period is not historically defensible.

The response did not earn the point for Part B because the discussion of women’s suffrage is not specific or accurately connected to the quoted text.

The response earned 1 point for Part C by explaining that department stores expanded consumer goods and increased the volume of shoppers.